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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives are proud to recognize individuals and  
4 organizations that have contributed to the welfare of the State  
5 of Illinois and its citizens and have distinguished themselves  
6 through significant personal achievement; and

7           WHEREAS, Dr. Linda Renee Baker has held the title of many  
8 "firsts" in Illinois government by holding key managerial  
9 positions under 3 Illinois governors; and

10           WHEREAS, During her career in public service, Dr. Baker  
11 held positions of increasing responsibility in a variety of  
12 State agencies; Dr. Baker served as the first African-American  
13 legislative liaison for an Illinois governor; Dr. Baker served  
14 as the assistant director of the Department of Public Aid in  
15 the mid-1990s; in 1999, Dr. Baker served as director of the  
16 Illinois Department of Employment Security, opening 4 new  
17 Illinois Employment and Training Centers (IETC) during that  
18 year; and

19           WHEREAS, Dr. Baker has been instrumental in working  
20 collaboratively with the business community, organized labor,  
21 education, local governments, and community based  
22 organizations to revamp the State's workforce development

1 system; Dr. Baker worked tirelessly to promote the Governor's  
2 vision of an inclusive public-private partnership for  
3 workforce development to bring together those in the State who  
4 need employees with those who prepare individuals for  
5 employment; and

6 WHEREAS, On January 28, 2000, Governor George H. Ryan named  
7 Dr. Baker as the new Secretary of the Illinois Department of  
8 Human Services, where she was only the second person to head  
9 and the first woman to lead the new super agency after its  
10 creation in 1997; and

11 WHEREAS, As secretary of the Department of Human Services,  
12 the State's largest agency, Dr. Baker led and managed a  
13 comprehensive human services agency with about 20,000  
14 employees and an annual budget of about \$5 billion; the agency  
15 provided services in the areas of community health and  
16 prevention, mental health, substance abuse, developmental  
17 disabilities and vocational rehabilitation; the agency also  
18 directed and implemented the State's nationally-recognized  
19 welfare reform efforts; and

20 WHEREAS, Dr. Baker brought achievement in higher education  
21 to her public service, holding a bachelor's and a master's  
22 degree in gerontology and health-care administration and  
23 public administration from the University of Illinois at

1 Springfield (UIS); In 2004, Dr. Baker earned a PhD in public  
2 administration from UIS; and

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Baker and her husband, G. Ronald Roby, are the  
4 parents of 2 children; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. Baker continued her commitment to public  
6 service by joining the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute on  
7 March 18, 2003, with a focus on expanding access to  
8 high-quality health care in partnership with the SIU School of  
9 Medicine and helping minorities and people with disabilities  
10 realize their full potential; Dr. Baker also teaches a course  
11 on leadership for SIU Carbondale; therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
13 NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
14 we honor Dr. Linda Renee Baker for her pioneering achievements  
15 in Illinois public service for African-American women; we  
16 express gratitude for her hard work and accomplishments as they  
17 continue to have a positive impact on the lives of millions of  
18 Illinoisans; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
20 presented to Dr. Linda Renee Baker as a symbol of our respect  
21 and esteem.